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SEASONABLE FESTIVITIES.

The gaiety that reigns supreme at this festive season, when friends and lovers assemble at the social board, or whirl in the giddy mazes of the dance, induces both sexes to be more than usually desirous of shining in personal attraction, and to devote a greater share of attention to the toilet. It is, at this particular season, that the VIRTUES and SINGULARLY HAPPY PROPERTIES OF THOSE AUXILIARIES OF PERSONAL BEAUTY, ROWLAND'S KALYDOR, ROWLAND'S MACASSAR OIL, and ROWLAND'S ODONTO, shine pre-eminent in their power; while the *white and swan-like neck*, the *rich luxuriant tress*, and the *pearly set of teeth*, form admirable trophies of their INESTIMABLE QUALITIES! The august patronage conceded by our Gracious Queen, and the several Sovereigns of Europe, together with the Beauties which adorn the circles of Princely and Regal Magnificence; and the confirmation by experience of the infallible efficacy of *these creative renovating Specifics*, have characterised them with perfection, and given them a celebrity unparalleled. They have proved the theme of the poet; they are celebrated in the periodical literature of the whole civilized world; the lays of Byron, and the voice of the universal press, have proclaimed the incomparable virtues of the "Oil Macassar," and of its accompanying preparations.

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Sir Archy and the Beggars.



Kenny O'Leary, reading the News by Deputy.

CHAPTER V.

IMPRESSIONS OF IRELAND.

It was not without a feeling closely allied to disappointment, that Sir Marmaduke Travers found the advent to his Irish estates uncelebrated by any of those testimonies on the part of his tenantry, his agent, Captain Hemsworth, had often so graphically pictured before him. The post-horses were suffered to drag his carriage unmolested to its destination; there was no assemblage of people to welcome—not a bonfire to hail his arrival. True, he had come totally unexpectedly. The two servants sent forward to prepare the lodge for his reception, only reached there a single day before himself. But Sir Marmaduke had often taken his Yorkshire tenants as much by surprise, and, there, he always found a deputation, and a cortège of mounted yeomen. There were addresses, and triumphal arches, and newspaper paragraphs, and all the innumerable but well-known accompaniments of those patronizing acts of condescension, which consist in the visit of a rich man to his own home. Now, however, all was different. No cheering sounds broke the quiet stillness of the deep valley. No troops of people on horseback or on foot filled the glen. The sun set, calm and golden, behind the purple hills, unscared by the lurid glow of a single bonfire. Save from an appearance of increased bustle, and an air of movement and stir around the lodge itself, there was nothing to mark his coming. There, indeed, servants were seen to pass and re-pass; workmen were employed upon the flower-garden and the shrubbery walks; and all the indications of care and attention to the villa and its grounds easily perceptible. Beyond these precincts, however, all was still and solitary as before. For miles the road could be seen without a single traveller. The mountains seemed destitute of inhabitants. The peaceful solemnity of the deep glen, along which the cloud shadows moved slowly in procession, increased the sense of loneliness, and Sir Marmaduke already began to suspect, that this last trial of a residence would scarcely prove more fortunate than the previous ones.

Age and wealth are uncomplying task-masters—habit and power endure restraint with an ill grace. The old baronet was half angry with himself for what he felt a mistake, and he could not forgive the country

which was the cause of it. He had come expressly to see and pronounce for himself—to witness with his own eyes, to hear with his own ears—and yet he knew not how it was, nothing revealed itself before him. The very labourers who worked in the garden seemed uncommunicative and shy. Their great respect and reverence he understood as a cautious reserve. He must send for Hemsworth—there was nothing else for it. Hemsworth was used to them, and could explain the mode of dealing with them. Their very idioms required translating, and he could not advance without an interpreter.

Not so his daughter. To her the scene had all the charm of romance. The lone dwelling beside the blue lake, the tall and peaked mountains lost in the white clouds, the waving forest with its many a tangled path, the bright islands that, gem-like, spangled the calm surface of the water, realized many a poetic dream of her childhood, and she felt that visionary happiness which serenity of mind, united to the warm imagination of early life, alone can bestow.

It was a fairy existence to live thus secluded in that lonely valley, where the flowers seemed to blossom for them alone; for them, the summer birds sang their roundelays, and the fair moon shed her pale light over hill and stream, with none to mark her splendour save themselves. Not these thoughts alone filled her mind. Already had she noticed the artless habits of the humble peasantry—their gratitude for the slightest services, their affectionate greetings, the touching beauty of their expressions, teeming with an imagery she never heard before. All appealed to her mind with a very different force from what they addressed themselves with to her father's. Already she felt attracted by the figurative eloquence, so popular a gift among the people. The warm fervour of fancy she had believed the attribute of highly-wrought temperaments only, she found here amid poverty and privation; flashes of bright wit broke from the gloom of daily suffering; and the fire which gives life its energy, burned brightly amid the ashes of many an extinguished hope. These were features she was not prepared to meet among a peasantry living in a wild unvisited district, and day by day they fascinated her more strongly.

It was not entirely to the difference between father and daughter that these varied impressions were owing. The people themselves assumed a tone quite distinctive to each. Sir Marmaduke they had always heard spoken of, as a stern-tempered man, whose severity towards his tenantry was, happily, tempered by the personal kindness of the agent. Captain Hemsworth constantly impressed them with the notion that all harsh measures originated with his principal—the favours came from himself

only. The exactions of high rents, the rigorous prosecutions of the law, he ever asserted were acts compulsory with him, but always repugnant to his own better feelings. Every little act of grace he accompanied by an assurance, that he "hoped Sir Marmaduke might not hear of it," as the consequences to himself might prove ruinous. In fact, he contrived to mislead both parties in their estimate of each other, and their first acquaintanceship, it could not be supposed, should dispel the illusion. The peasantry, however, were the first to discover the error: long before Sir Marmaduke had made any progress in deciphering the mystic symbols of *their* natures, they had read *his* from end to end. They scanned him with powers of observation no other people in Europe can compete with; and while *he* was philosophizing about the combined influence of their superstitions, their ignorance, and their apathy to suffering, *they* were accurately speculating on all the possible benefits which might accrue from the residence amongst them, of so very kind-hearted, but such a mere simpleton of a man as himself.

They listened with sincere pleasure—for they love any appeal to themselves—to the precepts he so liberally bestowed regarding "industry" and "frugality;" nor did they ever make the reply, which was ready at every lip, that industry cannot be practised without an occupation, nor frugality be pushed beyond the very borders of starvation. No; they answered with a semblance of concurrence,—“True for you, sir; the devil a lie in it—your honour knows it well.” Or, when pushed home by any argument against their improvidence, or recklessness, the ever-present reply was—“Sure, sir, it’s the will of God;” a piece of fatalism, that rescued them from many a difficulty, when no other aid was near.

“They are a simple set of people,” said Sir Marmaduke, as he sat at his breakfast in the small parlour of the lodge, which looked out upon the glen. “Very ignorant, very barbarous, but easily led—I see through them clearly.”

“I like them greatly,” said his daughter; “their gratitude knows no bounds for the slightest services; they have a kind of native courtesy, so rare to find amongst a peasantry: how that poor fellow last night wished to climb the cliff, where the eagle’s nest is, because I foolishly said I had never seen a young eagle.”

“They are totally misunderstood,” said Sir Marmaduke, sententially, rather following out the train of his own reflections, than noticing the remark of his daughter; “all one hears of their absurd reverence for the priest, or the devoted adherence they practise towards the old families of the country, is mere nonsense. You heard how Dan laughed this morning, when I joked with him about purgatory and the saints;

and what a droll description they gave of that queer household—the chieftain—what is his name?

“The O'Donoghue.”

“Yes; I never can remember it. No, no; they are not so bigotted; they are merely uninformed. We shall soon see many changes among them. I have written to Bradston about the plans for the cottages, and also the design for a school-house; and then, there's the chapel—that reminds me I have not returned the priest's visit; he was here the day before yesterday.”

“If you like, we'll ride there; I have heard that the glen is beautiful higher up.”

“I was just going to propose it; that mare seems quiet enough: Lawler says that she has been carrying a lady these last two years; will you try her?”

“I am longing to do so—I'm certain she is gentleness itself.”

“Strange fellow that horse-dealer is, too,” said the old gentleman in half soliloquy. “In no other country in the universe would such a mere simpleton have taken to the trade of a jockey; he actually did not know what price to ask for his horse; he left it all to ourselves. He'd soon finish his career in London, at that rate of going; but what have we got here—what in heaven's name is all this?” cried he aloud, as he suddenly rose from the table, and approached a small glass door that opened upon the lawn.

The object which so excited his astonishment was an assemblage of something more than a hundred poor people of every sex and age—from infancy to dotage—seated on the grass, in a wide semicircle, and awaiting the moment when he should issue forth. Every phase of human misery, which want and wretchedness can bestow, was there. The cheeks of some were pale and haggard with recent sickness; others had but a few tattered rags to cover them; many were cripples, unable to move without assistance. There was wan and sickly childhood, and tremulous old age; yet the tone of their voices showed no touch of sadness; they laughed and talked with all the seeming of light-heartedness; and many a droll and merry saying broke from that medley mass of suffering and sorrow. The sudden appearance of Sir Marmaduke at the door instantaneously checked all merriment, and a solemn silence ensued, as he walked forth and stood in front of them.

“What do you want, my good people?” said he at length, as none seemed disposed to open the proceedings.

Had their tongues been unlocked by the spell of a magician, the effect could not have been more instantaneous—a perfect volley of speech fol-

lowed, in which Sir Marmaduke in vain endeavoured to follow the words of any single speaker. Their rapid utterance, their vehement gesticulation, and a certain guttural mode of pronunciation, quite new to him, made them totally unintelligible, and he stood confused, perplexed, and confounded for several minutes, staring around on every side.

"Do, in heaven's name, be quiet," cried he at last; "let one or two only talk at a time, and I shall learn what you mean."

A renewal of the clamour ensued; but this time it was a general effort to enforce silence—a process which eventuated in a far greater uproar than before.

"Who, or what are you?" cried Sir Marmaduke, at last losing all temper, at the continuance of a tumult there seemed no prospect of coming to an end.

"We're your honour's tenants, every one of us," shouted the crowd with one voice.

"*My* tenants!" reiterated he in horror and astonishment. "What! is it possible that you are tenants on my property? Where do you live, my poor old man?" said he, addressing a venerable old fellow, with a head as white as snow, and a beard like a patriarch's.

"He does not talk any English, your honour's worship—he has only Irish; he lives in the glen beyond," said a comely woman at his side.

"And you, where do you come from yourself?"

"I'm a poor widow, your honour, with six childer; and sorra bit I have, but the little garden, and the grass of a goat; and sure, fifteen shillings every half year is more nor I can pay, wid all the scrapin' in life."

Sir Marmaduke turned away his head, and as he did so, his eye fell upon a poor creature, whose bloated cheeks and swollen figure denoted dropsy. The man interpreting the look into a compassionate inquiry, broke forth in a feeble voice—"I brought the nine shillings with me, yer honour; and though the captain refused to take it, I'm sure you won't turn me out of the little place, for being a trifle late. It's the watery dropsy—glory be to God!—I'm under; but they say I'm getting better."

While the poor creature spoke, a low muttering of pity burst from those around him, and many a compassionate look, and many a cheering word was expressed by those scarce less miserable than himself.

There was now a certain kind of order restored to the assembly; and as Sir Marmaduke moved along the line, each in turn addressed his supplication or complaint. One was threatened with a distress on his pig, because he owed two half-years' rent, and could only pay a portion

of the debt; there was a failure in the potatoe crop, and a great famine the consequence. Another was only recovering from the "shaking ague," and begged for time, since if he thrashed his oats, now, they would bring nothing in the market. A third entreated liberty to cut his turf on a distant bog, as he was up to his knees in water, in the place allotted to him.

Some came with odd shillings due on the last rent-day, and anxious to get leave to send their children to the school without payment.

Every one had some favour to look for—some mere trifle to the granter; the whole world to him who asked—and, for these, many had come miles away from homes far in the mountains; a glimmering hope of succour, the only encouragement to the weary journey.

As Sir Marmaduke listened with a feigned composure to narratives, at which his very heart bled, he chanced to observe a strange-looking figure, in an old scarlet uniform, and a paper cap, with a cock's feather stuck slantwise in the side of it. The wearer, a tall, bony youth, with yellow hair, carried a long wattle over his shoulder, as if it were a gun, and when the old baronet's eye fell upon him, he immediately stood bolt upright, and held the sapling to his breast, like a soldier presenting arms.

"Shoulder hoo!" he cried, and as the words were heard, a hearty burst of laughter ran through the crowd; every grief and sorrow was at once forgotten; the eyes wet with tears of sadness, were now moistened with those of mirth; and they laughed like those whose hearts had never known suffering.

"Who is this fellow?" said Sir Marmaduke, half doubting how far he might relish the jest like the others.

"Terry the Woods, your honour," replied a score of voices together.

"Terry the Woods!" repeated he, "and is Terry a tenant of mine?"

"Faix, I am proud to say I am not," said Terry, grounding his weapon, and advancing a step towards him; "divil a farthin' of rent I ever paid, nor ever will. I do have my health mighty well—glory be to God!—and sleep sound, and have good clothes, and do nothing for it; and they say I am a fool, but which of us is the greatest fool after all."

Another outbreak of laughter was only quelled by Sir Marmaduke asking the reason of Terry's appearance there, that morning—if he had nothing to look for.

"I just came to pay my respects," said Terry composedly, "to wish you a welcome to the country. I thought that as you might be lading the same kind of life as myself, we wouldn't be bad companions, you see, neither of us having much on our hands; and then," continued he,

as he took off his paper bonnet and made a deep reverence, "I wanted to see the young lady there, for they tould me she was a born beauty."

Miss Travers blushed. She was young enough to blush at a compliment from such a source, as her father said laughingly—

"Well, Terry, and have they been deceiving you?"

"No," said he, gravely, as with steady gaze he fixed his large blue eyes on the fair features before him. "No—she is a purty crayture—a taste sorrowful or so—but I like her all the better. I was the same myself when I was younger."

Terry's remark was true enough. The young girl had been a listener for some time to the stories of the people, and her face betrayed the sad emotions of her heart. Never before had such scenes of human suffering been revealed before her—the tortuous windings of the poor man's destiny, where want and sickness lie in wait for those whose happiest hours are the struggles against poverty and its evils.

"I can show you the beautifullest places in the whole country," said Terry, approaching Miss Travers, and addressing her in a low voice, "I'll tell you where the white heath is growing, with big bells on it, like cups, to hould the dew. Were you ever up over Keim-an-eigh?"

"Never," said she, smiling at the eagerness of her questioner.

"I'll bring you, then, by a short-cut, and you can ride the whole way, and maybe we'll shoot an eagle—have you a gun in the house?"

"Yes, there are three or four," said she humouring him.

"And if I shoot him, I'll give you the wing-feathers—that's what they always gave their sweethearts long ago—but them times is gone by."

The girl blushed deeply, as she remembered the present of young O'Donoghue, on the evening they came up the glen. She called to mind the air of diffidence and constraint in which he made the proffer, and for some minutes paid no attention to Terry, who still continued to talk as rapidly as before.

"There, they are filing off," said Terry—"orderly time," as he once more shouldered his sapling and stood erect. This observation was made with reference to the crowd of poor people, whose names and place of residence Sir Marmaduke having meanwhile written down, they were now returning to their homes with happy and comforted hearts. "There they go," cried Terry, "and an awkward squad they are."

"Were you ever a soldier, Terry?" said Miss Travers.

The poor youth grew deadly pale—the very blood forsook his lips, as he muttered, "I was." Sir Marmaduke came up at the instant, and Terry checked himself at once and said—

"Whenever you want me, leave word at Mary M'Kelly's, in the glen below, and I'll hear of it."

"But don't you think you had better remain here with us? you could help in the garden and the walks."

"No; I never do be working at all—I hate work."

"Yes, but easy work, Terry," said Miss Travers, "among the flowers and shrubs here."

"No—I'd be quite low and sorrowful if I was to be staying in one place, and maybe—maybe"—here he whispered so low, as only to be heard by her—"maybe they'd find me out."

"No; there's no fear of that," said she, "we'll take care no one shall trouble you—stay here, Terry."

"Well, I believe I will," said he, after a pause, "I may go away when I like."

"To be sure, and now let us see how you are to be lodged," said Sir Marmaduke, who already, interested by that inexplicable feeling which grows out of our pity for idiocy, entered into his daughter's schemes for poor Terry's welfare.

A small cottage near the boat-house on the verge of the lake, inhabited by a labourer and his children, offered the wished-for asylum, and there Terry was at once installed, and recognised as a member of the household.

CHAPTER VI.

"THE BLACK VALLEY."

ALTHOUGH deferred by the accidents of the morning, Sir Marmaduke's visit to the priest was not abandoned, and at length, he and his daughter set out on their excursion up the glen. Their road, after pursuing the highway for about two miles, diverged into a narrow valley, from which there was no exit save by the mode in which it was entered. Vast masses of granite rock, piled heap above heap, hung as it were suspended over their heads, the tangled honey-suckle falling in rich festoons from these, and the purple arbutus glowing like grape-clusters among the leaves. It was a mellow, autumnal day, when the warmth of colouring is sobered down by massive shadows—the impress of the

clouds which moved slowly above. The air was hot and thick, and, save when an occasional breeze came, wafted from the water, was even oppressive.

The silence of the glen was profound—not a bird was heard, nor was there in the vast expanse of air, a single wing seen floating. As they rode, they often stopped to wonder at the strange but beautiful effects of light that glided now slowly along the mountains—disappeared—then shone again; the giant shadows seeming to chase each other through the dreary valley. Thus, sauntering along they took no note of time, when at last the long low cottage, where the priest lived, came in sight. It was an humble abode, but beautifully situated at the bottom of the glen; the whole valley lying expanded in front, with its bright rivulet and its bold sides of granite. The cottage itself was little better than that of a poor farmer; and save from the ornament of some creepers, which were trained against the walls, and formed into a deep porch at the entrance, differed in no respect from such. A few straggling patches of cultivation, of the very rudest kind, were seen, here and there, but all without any effort at fence or enclosure. Some wild fruit-trees were scattered over the little lawn in front, if the narrow strip of grass that flanked the river could be called such, and here, a small Kerry cow was grazing, the only living thing to be seen.

A little well, arched over with pieces of rock, and surmounted by a small wooden cross, stood close to the road-side, and the wild-thorn that overshadowed it was hung on every side with small patches of rags of every colour and texture that human dress ever consisted of; a sight new to the eyes of the travellers, who knew not, that the shrine was deemed holy, and the tree, the receptacle of the humble offering of those, whose sorrows of mind and body came there for alleviation and succour.

Sir Marmaduke dismounted and approached the door, which lay wide open; he knocked gently with his whip, and as no answer to his summons was returned, repeated it again and again. He now ventured to call aloud, but no one came, and at last, both father and daughter began to suspect there might be no one in the house.

“This is most strange,” said he, after a long pause, and an effort to peep in through the windows, half hid with honey-suckle. “The place seems totally deserted. Let us try at the back, however.”

As the old baronet wended his way to the rear of the cottage, he muttered a half upbraiding against his daughter for not complying with his desire to have a groom along with them—a want, which now increased the inconvenience of their position. She laughingly defended

herself against the charge, and at the same moment sprang down from her saddle, to assist in the search.

"I certainly perceived some smoke from the chimney as we came up the glen, and there must have been some one here lately, at least," said she, looking eagerly around on every side.

"This is indeed solitude," muttered her father, as he listened for some minutes, during which the stillness had an effect most appalling.

While he was speaking, Miss Travers had drawn near to a low latticed window which lay half open, and as she peeped in, immediately drew back, and beckoned with her hand for her father to approach, intimating by a cautious gesture that he should do so noiselessly. Sir Marmaduke came stealthily to her side, and, leaning over her shoulder, looked into the room. As both father and daughter exchanged glances, they seemed with difficulty to refrain from laughing, while astonishment was strongly depicted on the countenance of each. As they continued to gaze, their first emotion gradually yielded to a look of intense interest at the scene before them.

Seated beside the large turf fire of the priest's kitchen, for such it was, was a youth of some fifteen or sixteen years. His figure, light and well proportioned, was clad in a fashion which denoted his belonging to the better class, though neglect and time had made many an inroad on the costume. His brow was lofty and delicately formed—the temples marked with many a thin blue vein, which had given a look of delicacy to the countenance, if the deep glow of health had not lit up his cheeks, and imparted a bright lustre to his eyes. He held before him an open volume, from which he declaimed rather than read aloud, as it seemed, for the special delight and amusement of a small ragged urchin of about nine years old—who, with bare legs and feet, was seated on a little pyramid of turf, right opposite to him.

Well might Sir Marmaduke and his daughter feel surprise; the volume was Homer, from which, with elevated voice and flashing eye, the boy was reading—the deep-toned syllables ringing through the low-vaulted chamber with a sweet but a solemn music. Contrasted with the fervid eloquence of the youth, was the mute wonder and rapt attention of the little fellow who listened. Astonishment, awe, and eager curiosity, blended together in that poor little face, every lineament of which trembled with excitement. If a high soaring imagination and elevated tone of thought were depicted in the one, the other, not less forcibly realized the mute and trembling eagerness of impassioned interest.

The youth paused for a few seconds, and seemed to be reflecting over

what he read, when the boy, in an accent broken with anxiety, cried out—

“Read it, again, Master Herbert. Oh, read it again. It's like the cry of the big stag-hound at Carrignacurra.”

“It is the language of the gods, Mickey—finer and grander than ever man spoke,” replied the youth with fervour. “Listen to this, here;” and then, with solemn cadence he declaimed some twenty lines, while, as if the words were those of an incantation, the little fellow sat spell-bound, with clasped hands and staring eye-balls gazing before him.

“What does it mean, Master Herbert?—what is it?” said he, in panting eagerness.

“It's about a great hero, Mickey, that was preparing for battle. He was putting on his armour, a coat and a cap of steel, and he was belting on his sword.”

“Yes, yes,” broke in the little fellow, “and wasn't he saying how he'd murder and kill all before him?”

“Right enough,” said the youth, laughing. “You guessed it well.”

“Ah, I knew it,” said the boy. “I saw how you clenched your fist, and your eyes wor shinin' like sparks of fire, and I knew it was darin' them he was, in the book there. What did he do after, Master Herbert? Just tell me that, sir.”

“He went out in his chariot——”

“Say it like himself first, sir, av it's plazin' to ye,” said he, with a most imploring look of entreaty. “I do be glad to hear it out of the book.”

The youth, thus entreated, resumed the volume, and read on for several minutes without stopping.

“Oh, that's grand!” said the boy, in a burst of enthusiasm. “'Tis for all the world the way the thunder comes down the glen—moanin' first, far off on the mountains, and then swellin' into a big roar, and afterwards going clap! clap! like a giant clapping his hands. Did he kill the inimy, master dear?”

“No, he was killed himself, and his body dragged over the battle-field.”

“Wirra, wirra, wirra!” broke in the child, while he rung his hands, and burst forth into a torrent of tumultuous grief.

“He was killed, Mickey, and listen to the lament of his friends for his death.”

Scarcely had the youth read a few lines, when Sir Marmaduke, advancing a little farther, his shadow fell across the chamber. The youth sprang up at once, and came towards them. The flush of surprise—it

might be, too, of shame—was on his features; but there was less of awkwardness than many might have exhibited in the manner of his address, as he said—

“Father Luke is from home, sir. He has been sent for to Ballyvourney”

“You are his relation, I presume?” said Sir Marmaduke, without letting him finish his speech.

“I am his pupil,” replied the youth, with a tone in which offended pride was clearly confessed.

“I ask pardon,” said the baronet hastily. “It was merely that I might convey my respectful greetings to the worthy father that I asked the question. Perhaps you will allow me to trespass so far upon you, and say, that Sir Marmaduke Travers has been here.”

While Sir Marmaduke was speaking, the youth’s eyes were fixed with a steadfast gaze on the features of the young girl, of whose presence till then he seemed unconscious. Fixed and earnest as his stare was, there was nothing in it of rudeness, still less of insult. It was the unequivocal expression of astonishment, the suddenly-awakened sense of admiration in one, on whom, till that very instant, beauty had shed no fascination. His eyes were bent upon her, as Sir Marmaduke thus finished speaking, and the old man smiled as he saw the wonder-struck admiration of the boy.

“You will please to say Sir Marmaduke Travers,” repeated he once more, to recall the scattered senses of the youth.

“And his daughter?” murmured the other, as he still continued to stare at her.

“Yes, his daughter,” replied Sir Marmaduke, smiling. “May I ask if there be no shorter road back to ‘the Lodge,’ than that yonder? for I perceive it is full two hours later than I suspected.”

“None for those on horseback. The mountain path lies yonder, but even on foot it is not without danger.”

“Come, then, Sybella; let us lose no time. We must ride briskly, to reach home by day-light. We are late enough already.”

“Too late, if you ride not very fast,” replied the youth. “The rain has fallen heavily on the mountains this afternoon. See that waterfall yonder. I crossed it dry-shod at day-break, and now, it is a cataract. This river rises rapidly, and in a single night’s rain I have seen the valley all one lake.”

“What are we to do then?” cried Miss Travers, eagerly, for now she felt self-reproach at her refusal to take a groom along with them, and was vexed with herself, as well as uneasy for her father.

"Keep the left of the valley till you reach the tall black rock they call 'the Pulpit'—you know it, at least you must have seen it, as you came along—then cross the stream, it will be fordable enough by that time, and make the best of your way along under the cliffs, till you arrive at the broken bridge—the two buttresses, I mean. Re-cross the stream there, and gain the meadows, and in some hundred yards you are safe upon the high road. Away then; lose no more time, now; a minute is all the space between risk and safety;" and with these words he sprang forward, and lifted the young girl to her saddle, ere she had time or forethought to decline the service.

"May we not know the name of our kind adviser?" asked Sir Marmaduke, as he mounted his horse.

"Hark! there it comes!" said the youth, pointing upwards to the brow of a cliff, over which a leaping torrent had just bounded. "The mountain lakes are flooded, when Derrybahn is spouting. Away! away! if you care for safety."

They turned their horses' heads as he spoke, and with a hasty "good bye" they spurred forwards. Short as the time had been since they travelled the same path, the scene was wonderfully changed; the placid stream that stole along, murmuring over its gravelly bed, now rushed onward with a yellow current streaked with white foam; the tiny rivulets that came in slender drops upon the road-side, were now become continuous streams of water, hurrying on to bear their tribute to the river. The sky itself was black and lowering, resting midway on the mountains, or drifting past in heavy clouds, while no breeze was stirring below. The many torrents as they fell, filled the air with a low monotonous sound, like the noise of tree tops moved by a distant storm.

"I thought I heard a voice calling to us," said Sir Marmaduke, as for the first time they slackened their pace, to clear several loose stones that obstructed the way—"did you hear it?"

"I half thought so, too," replied his daughter; "but I can see no one near. There it is again!"

They halted and listened; but the swelling uproar of the waterfalls drowned every sound, and they spurred forward once more, fearing to loiter longer; yet, both as they went, thought they could trace the words, "come back, come back;" but from some strange dread of communicating tears that might not be real, neither told the other.

"He said the left side of the valley; but surely he mistook: see how the water has gained here, and the opposite bank seems dry."

"Let us follow the advice, father," cried Sybella, "we have no guid-

ance save his ; he could not—would not deceive us. Is it not grand ! with all its danger, I can admire it.”

As she spoke, a tremendous clap of thunder broke above their heads, and made the valley tremble with the sound, while, as if by the shock the charged clouds were rent open, and the rain descended in torrents. With the swooping gush of the ocean spray, storm-lashed and drifted, the rain came down, wrapping in misty darkness every object around them. And now, the swollen cataracts tore madly down the mountain sides, leaping from crag to crag, and rending the clayey soil in deep clefts and gashes. Again the thunder pealed out, and every echo sent back the sound, till the whole glen vibrated with the deafening clamour. Still they sped onward. The terrified horses strained every limb, and dashing madly on—mid rock and rushing water they went, now, clearing at a bound the course of some gushing stream—now, breasting the beating rain with vigorous chest.

The storm increased ; the howling wind joined with the deep-toned thunder into one long continuous roar, that seemed to shake the very air itself.

“Yonder !” said the father, as he pointed to the tall dark pinnacle of rock, known by the country people as “the Pulpit”—“yonder !”

Sybella strained her eye to see through the dense beating rain, and at last caught sight of the huge mass, around whose summit the charged clouds were flying.

“We must cross the river in this place,” said the old man, as he suddenly checked his horse, and looked with terrified gaze on the swollen stream that came boiling and foaming over to where they stood, with branches of trees and fragments of rock rolling onward in the tide. “The youth told us of this spot.”

“Let us not hesitate, father,” cried the young girl, with a tone of firm, resolute daring she had not used before—“remember what he said, a minute may save or ruin us. Great heaven ! what is that ?”

A terrific shriek followed her words, and she fell with her head upon her horse’s mane ; a broad flash of lightning had burst from a dark cloud, and came with vivid force upon her eyeballs.

“Father, dear father, my sight is gone,” she screamed aloud, as lifting up her head she rubbed the orbs now paralyzed by the shock.

“My child, my child !” cried the old man, with the piercing shriek of a breaking heart ; “look on me, look towards me. Oh, say that you can see me, now—my brain is turning.”

“Oh God, I thank thee !” said the terrified girl, as once more her vision was restored, and, dimly, objects began to form themselves before her.

With bare head and upturned eyes, the aged man looked up, and poured forth his prayer of thankfulness to heaven. The raging storm beat on his brow unfelt; his thoughts were soaring to the Throne of Mercies, and knew not earth, nor all its sorrows.

A clap of thunder at the moment broke from the dense cloud above them, and then, in quick succession, like the pealing of artillery, came several more, while the forked lightning shot to and fro, and at last, as if the very earth was riven to its centre, a low booming sound was heard amid the clouds; the darkness grew thicker, and a crash followed that shook the ground beneath them, and splashed the wild waves on every side. The spray sprang madly up, while the roaring of the stream grew louder; the clouds swept past, and the tall Pulpit rock was gone! Struck by lightning, it had rolled from its centre, and fallen across the river, the gushing waters of which poured over it in floods, and fell in white sheets of foam and spray beyond it.

"God is near us, my child," said the old man with fervour; "let us onward."

Her streaming eyes turned on him one look of affection—the emblem of a heart's love—and she prepared to follow.

To return was now impossible, the river had already extended the whole way across the valley in the rear; the only chance of safety lay in front.

"Keep by my side, dearest," said the father, as he rode first into the stream, and tried to head the terrified animal against the current.

"I am near you, father, fear not for me," said she firmly, her bold heart nerved to the danger.

For some seconds the affrighted horses seemed rooted to the earth, and stood amid the boiling current as if spell-bound; a fragment of a tree, however, in its course, struck the flank of the leading horse, and he sprang madly forward, followed by the other. Now, breasting the stream—now, sinking to the mane beneath it, the noble beasts struggled fiercely on till near the spot, where the Pulpit-rock had left a space between it and the opposite bank, and here, a vast volume of water now poured along unchecked by any barrier.

"To my side—near me, dearest—near me," cried the father, as his horse dashed into the seething flood and sunk above the crest beneath it.

"I cannot, father—I cannot," screamed the affrighted girl, as with a bound of terror her horse sprang back from the chasm, and refused to follow. The old man heard not the words—the current had swept him far down into the stream, amid the rent branches and the rolling

rocks—"My child, my child," the only accents heard above the raging din.

Twice did the heroic girl try to face the current, but in vain—the horse plunged wildly up and threatened to fall back, when suddenly through the white foam a figure struggled on and grasped the bridle at the head; next moment, a man leaped forward and was breasting the surge before her—

"Head the stream—head the stream if you can," cried he, who still held on, while the wild waves washed over him; but the poor horse, rendered unmanageable through fear, had yielded to the current, and was now each moment nearing the cataract.

"Cling to me, now," cried the youth, as with the strength of desperation he tore the girl from the saddle, while with the other hand he grasped an ash bough that hung drooping above his head. As he did so, the mare bounded forward—the waves closed over her, and she was carried over the precipice.

"Cling fast to me, and we are safe," cried the youth, and with vigorous grasp he held on the tree, and thus supported, breasted the stream and reached the bank. Exhausted and worn out, both mind and body powerless, they both fell senseless on the grass.

The last shriek of despair broke from the father's heart as the horse, bereft of rider, swept past him in the flood. The cry aroused the fainting girl; she half rose to her feet and called upon him. The next moment they were locked in each other's arms.

"It was he who saved me, father," said she in accents broken with joy and sorrow; "he risked his life for mine."

The youth recovered consciousness as the old man pressed him to his heart.

"Is she safe?" were the first words he said as he stared around him vaguely, and then, as if overcome, he fell heavily back upon the sward.

A joyous cheer broke forth from several voices near, and at the instant, several country people were seen coming forward, with Terry at their head.

"Here we are—here we are, and in good time too," cried Terry; "and if it wasn't that you took a fool's advice, we'd have gone the other road. The carriage is in the glen, my lady," said he, kneeling down beside Sybella, who still remained clasped in her father's arms.

By this time, some of Sir Marmaduke's servants had reached the spot, and by them the old man and his daughter were assisted toward the high road, while two others carried the poor youth, by this time totally unable to make the least exertion.

"This brave boy—this noble fellow," said Sir Marmaduke, as he stooped to kiss the pale high forehead, from which the wet hair hung backwards—"Can no one tell me who he is?"

"He's the young O'Donoghue," replied a half dozen voices together; "a good warrant for courage or bravery any day."

"The O'Donoghue!" repeated Sir Marmaduke, vainly endeavouring in the confusion of the moment to recall the name, and where he had heard it.

"Ay, the O'Donoghue," shouted a coarse voice near him, as a new figure rode up on a small mountain pony. "It oughtn't to be a strange name in these parts. Rouse yourself, Master Herbert, rouse up, my child—sure it isn't a wettin' would cow you this way?"

"What! Kerry, is this you?" said the youth faintly, as he looked around him with half-closed eyelids. "Where's my father?"

"Faix, he's snug at the parlour fire, my darlin', where his son ought to be, if he wasn't turning guide on the mountains, to the enemy of his kith and kin."

These words were said in a whisper, but with an energy that made the boy start from the arms of those who bore him.

"Here's the pony, Master Herbert, get up on him, and be off at once; sure there isn't a blackguard there, with lace on his coat, wouldn't be laughing at your old clothes when the light comes."

Sir Marmaduke and his daughter were a few paces in advance as these words were spoken, the old baronet giving directions for bestowing every care and attention on one he deemed his guest.

The boy, ashamed and offended both, yielded to the counsel, and suffered himself to be placed upon the saddle.

"Now, then, hould fast, and I'll guide him," said Kerry, as elbowing the crowd right and left, he sprung forward at a run, and in less than a minute had disappeared in the darkness.

Sir Marmaduke became distracted at the loss of his benefactor, and message after message was despatched to bring him back, but all in vain; Kerry and his pony had already gained so much in advance, none could overtake them.

"To-morrow then, my child," said Sir Marmaduke, "to-morrow will, I hope, enable me to speak my gratitude, though I shall not sleep well to-night—I never rested with so heavy a debt unpaid before."

And with these words they slowly wended their way homeward.

CHAPTER VII

"SIR ARCHY'S TEMPER TRIED."

IT was strange that, although the old man and his tender daughter should have sustained no other ill results from their adventure, than the terror which even yet dwelt on their minds, the young and vigorous youth, well trained to every accident of flood or field, felt it most seriously.

The exertions he made to overtake Sir Marmaduke and his daughter, followed by the struggle in the swollen stream, had given such a shock to his frame, that ere day broke the following morning, he was in a fever. The mental excitement conspiring with fatigue and exhaustion, had brought on the symptoms of his malady with such rapidity, that it was evident, even to the unaccustomed observers around him, his state was precarious.

Sir Archibald was the first person at the sick youth's bed-side. The varied fortunes of a long life, not devoid of its own share of vicissitude, had taught him so much of medical skill, as can give warning of the approach of fever; and as he felt the strong and frequent pulse, and saw the flushed and almost swollen features before him, he recognized the commencement of severe and dangerous illness.

Vague and confused images of the previous night's adventure, or visions of the dark valley and the tempest, occupied all the boy's thoughts; and though he endeavoured, when spoken to, to preserve coherency and memory, the struggle was unavailing; and the immediate impression of a question past, his mind wandered back to the theme which filled his brain.

"How was it then?" said Sir Archy, who, as he sat beside the sick bed, questioned the youth about his adventure. "You said something of a horse?"

"Yes; she was riding. Oh, how bravely she rode too! It was fine to see her as the spray fell over her like a veil, and she shook the drops from her hair."

"Whence came she? Who was the lady?"

"Take care—take care," said the youth in a solemn whisper, and with a steadfast look before him; "Derrybahn has given warning—the

storm is coming. It is not for one so tender as you to tempt the river of the black valley."

"Be still, my boy," said the old man; "you must not speak thus; your head will ache if you take not rest—keep quiet."

"Yes; my head, my head," muttered he vaguely, repeating the words which clinked upon his mind. "She put her arm round my neck—There—there," cried he, starting up wildly in his bed, "catch it—seize it—my feet are slipping—the rock moves—I can hold no longer; there—there," and with a low moaning sigh he sunk back fainting on the pillow.

Sir Archibald applied all his efforts to enforce repose and rest; and having partially succeeded, hastened to the O'Donoghue's chamber, to confer with the boy's father on what steps should be taken to procure medical aid.

It was yet some hours earlier than the accustomed time of his waking, as the old man saw the thin and haggard face of Sir Archy peering between the curtains of his bed.

"Well, what is it?" said he, in some alarm at the unexpected sight. "Has Gubbins issued the distress? Are the scoundrels going to sell us out?"

"No, no; it is another matter brings me here," replied M'Nab, with a gravity even deeper than usual.

"That infernal bond! By God, I knew it; it never left my dreams these last three nights. Mark was too late, I suppose, or they wouldn't take the interest, and the poor fellow sold his mare to get the money."

"Dinna fash about these things now," said M'Nab with impatience, "It's that poor callant, Herbert—he's very ill—it's a fever he's caught. I'm thinking."

"Oh, Herbert!" said O'Donoghue, with a tone of evident relief, that his misfortunes had taken any other shape than the much-dreaded one of money-calamity. "What of him?"

"He's in a fever; his mind is wandering already."

"Not a bit of it; it's a mere wetting—a common cold: the boy fell into the river last night at the old bridge there; Kerry told me something about it; and so, maybe, Mark may reach Cork in good time after all."

"I am no' speaking of Mark just now," said M'Nab tartly, "but of the other lad, wha may be dangerously ill, if something be nae done quickly."

"Then, send for Roach. Let one of the boys saddle a norse and ride over to Killarney. Oh! I was forgetting; let a fellow go off on

foot, he'll get there before evening. It is confoundedly hard to have nothing in the stables, even to mount a messenger. I hope Mark may be able to manage matters in Cork. Poor fellow, he hates business as much as I do myself."

Sir Archy did not wait for the conclusion of this rambling reply. Long before it was over, he was half-way down stairs in search of a safe messenger to despatch to Killarney for Doctor Roach, muttering between his teeth as he went—

"We hae nae muckle chance of the docter if we canna send the siller to fetch him, as weel as the flunkie. Eh, sirs?—he's a cannie chiel, is auld Roach, and can smell a fee as soon as scent a fever," and with this sensible reflection he proceeded on his way.

Meanwhile the O'Donoghue himself had summoned energy enough to slip on an old and ragged dressing-gown, and a pair of very unlocomotive slippers, with which attired, he entered the sick boy's room.

"Well, Herbert, lad," said he, drawing the curtains back, and suffering the grey light to fall on the youth's features, "what is the matter? your uncle has been routing me up with a story about you."

He ceased suddenly, as his eyes beheld the change a few hours had wrought in the boy's appearance: His eyes, deep-buried in their orbits, shone with an unnatural lustre—his cheeks were pale and sunken, save where a bright patch of florid red marked the centre of each; his lips were dry and shrivelled, and had a slight tremulous motion, as if he were muttering to himself.

"Poor fellow," said the father, "how dreadfully ill he looks. Have you any pain, my boy?"

The boy knew the voice, and recognized the kindly accent, but could not hear or understand the words; and as his eyes glistened with delight, he stole his burning hand from beneath the bed-clothes, and held it out, all trembling, towards his father.

"How sudden this has been: you were quite well last night, Herbert."

"Last night!" echoed the boy, with a strange emphasis on the only words he had caught up.

"No, by the way, it was the night before I mean. I did not see you last night; but, cheer up, my dear boy; we've sent for Roach—he'll put you to rights at once. I hope Mark may reach home before the doctor goes. I'd like to have his advice about that strain in the back."

These last words were uttered in soliloquy, and seemed to flow from a train of thought very different from that arising from the object before him. Sunk in these reflections, he drew near the window, which looked out upon the old court-yard behind the house, and where now a very

considerable crowd of beggars had assembled to collect the alms usually distributed each morning from the kitchen. Each was provided with an ample canvas bag, worn over the neck by a string, and capable of containing a sufficiency of meal or potatoes, the habitual offering, to support the owner for a couple of days at least. They were all busily engaged in stowing away the provender of various sorts and kinds, as luck, or the preference of the cook, decided, laughing or grumbling over their portions, as it might be, when Sir Archibald M'Nab hurriedly presented himself in the midst of them—an appearance which seemed to create no peculiar satisfaction, if one were to judge from the increased alacrity of their movements, and the evident desire they exhibited to move off.

The O'Donoghue laughed as he witnessed the discomfiture of the ragged mob, and let down the window-sash to watch the scene.

"'Tis going we are ; God be good to us !"

"Ye needn't be cursing that way," said an old hag, with a sack on her back, large enough to contain a child.

"Eyah ! the Lord look down on the poor," said a little fat fellow, with a flannel night-cap and stockings without any feet ; "there's no pity now at all, at all."

"The heavens be your bed, any way," said a hard-featured little woman, with an accent that gave the blessing a very different signification from the mere words.

"Blessed Joseph ! sure it isn't robbers and thieves we are, that ye need hunt us out of the place."

Such were the exclamations on every side, intermingled with an undergrowl of the "Scotch naygur"—"the ould scrape-gut," and other equally polite and flattering epithets.

"This is no' a place for ye, ye auld beldames and blackguards ; awa wi' ye—awa wi' ye at once."

"Them's the words ye'll hear in heaven yet, darlint," said an old fiend of a woman with one eye, and a mouth garnished by a single tooth.

"Them's the very words St. Peter will spake to yourself."

"Begorra, he'll not be strange in the other place anyhow," muttered another. "'Tis there he'll meet most of his countrymen."

This speech was the signal for a general outburst of laughter.

"Awa wi' ye, ye ragged deevils ; ye'r a disgrace to a Christian country."

"Throth we wear breeches an us," said an old fellow on crutches ; "and sure I hear that's more nor they do, in the parts your honour comes from."

Sir Archy's passion boiled over at this new indignity. He stormed

and swore, with all the impetuous rage of one beside himself with passion; but the effect on his hearers was totally lost. The only notice they took was an occasional exclamation of—

"There it is now! Oh, blessed father! hear what he says! Oh, holy mother! isn't he a terrible man?"—comments by no means judiciously adapted to calm his irritation. Meanwhile symptoms of evacuating the territory were sufficiently evident. Cripples were taken on the backs and shoulders of their respective friends; sacks and pouches were slung over the necks. Many a preparatory shake of the rags showed that the wearer was getting ready for the road, when Sir Archy, suddenly checking himself in the full torrent of his wrath, cried out—

"Bide a wee—stay a minit, ye auld beasties—I hae a word to say to some amang ye."

The altered tone of voice in which he spoke seemed at once to have changed the whole current of popular feeling; for now they all chimed in with—

"Arrah, he's a good man after all; sure 'tis only a way he has"—sentiments which increased in fervency as Sir Archibald took a tolerably well-filled purse from his pocket, and drew out some silver into his hand, many exclaiming—

"'Tis the kind heart often has the hard word; and sure ye can see in his face he isn't cruel."

"Hear till me," cried Sir Archy aloud, as he held up a shilling before their wistful eyes, "there's mony a ane amang ye, able to earn siller. Which o' ye now will step down to Killarney, and tell the docter he's wanted up here wi a' despatch? Ye maun go fast and bring him, or send him here to-night; and if ye do, I'll gie ye this piece o' siller money when ye come back."

A general groan from that class whose age and infirmities placed them out of the reach of competitorship, met this speech, while from the more able section, a not less unequivocal expression of discontent broke forth.

"Down to Killarney!" cried one; "begorra, I wonder ye didn't say Kenmare when ye war about it—the devil a less than ten miles it is."

"Eyah! I'll like to see my own four bones going the same road; sorra a house the whole way where there's a drop of milk or a pratie."

"That's the charity to the poor, I suppose," said the fat fellow of the night-cap. "'Tis wishing it I am, the same charity."

"We wor to bring the doctor on our back, I hope," said a cripple in a bowl.

"Did ever man hear or see the like o' this?" exclaimed M'Nab, as with uplifted hands he stared in wonderment around him. "One wad na believe it."

"True for you, honey," joined in one of the group. "I'm fifty-three years on the road, and I never heerd of any one askin' us to do a hand's turn, afore."

"Out of my sight, ye worthless ne'er-do-weels; awa wi ye at once and for ever. I'll send twenty miles round the country, but I'll hae a mastiff here, 'ill worry the first o' ye that dares to come near the house."

"On my conscience, it will push you hard to find a wickeder baste nor yourself."

"Begorra, he won't be uglier any how."

And with these comments, and the hearty laughter that followed, the tattered and ragged group defiled out of the yard with all the honours of war, leaving Sir Archy alone, overwhelmed with astonishment and anger.

A low chuckling laugh, as the sash was closed over head, made him look up, and he just caught a glimpse of O'Donoghue as he retired from the window; for in his amusement at the scene, the old man forgot the sick boy and all about him, and only thought of the ridiculous interview he had witnessed.

"His ain father—his ain father!" muttered Sir Archy, as with his brows contracted and his hands clasped behind his back, he ruminated in sadness on all he saw. "What brings ye back again, ye lazy scoundrels? How dare ye venture in here again?"

This not over-courteous interrogatory was addressed to poor Terry the Woods, who, followed by one of Sir Marmaduke's footmen, had at that instant entered the yard.

"What for, are ye come, I say? and what's the flunkie wanting beside ye?"

Terry stood thunderstruck at the sudden outbreak of temper, and turned at once to the responsible individual, to whom he merely acted as guide, to make a reply.

"And are ye tramping it too?" said M'Nab, with a sneering accent as he addressed the footman. "Methinks ye might hae a meal's meat out o' the goold lace on your hat, and look mair like a decent Christian afterwards. Ye'r out of place maybe."

These last words were delivered in an irony, to which a tone of incredulity gave all the sting; and these only were intelligible to the sleek and well-fed individual to whom they were addressed.

In all likelihood, had he been charged with felony or highway robbery, his self-respect might have sustained his equanimity; any

common infraction of the statute-law might have been alleged against him without exciting an undue indignation ; but the contemptuous insinuation of being "out of place"—that domestic outlawry, was more than human endurance could stomach ; nor was the insult more palatable coming from one he believed to be a servant himself. It was therefore with the true feeling of outraged dignity he replied—

"Not exactly out of place jest now, friend ; though, if they don't treat you better than your looks show, I'd recommend you trying for a new situation."

Of a verity, Sir Archibald's temper was destined to sore trials that morning ; but this was a home thrust, for which no forethought could have prepared him.

"I hope I am no' going to lose my senses," said he, as he pressed his hands on either side of his temples. "May the Lord keep me from that worst of a' human calamities."

This pious wish, uttered with real, unfeigned fervency, seemed to act like a charm upon the old man's temper, as though the very appeal had suggested a calmer and more patient frame of mind. It was, then, with all the dignity of his natural character, when unclouded by momentary flashes of passion, that he said—

"What may be your errand here this morning?"

Few and simple as the words were, there was that in their quiet, unassuming delivery, which in a second recalled the footman to a full consciousness of his impertinent mistake. He saw at once the immeasurable gulph, impassible to any effort of assumption or insolence, which separated them, and with the ready tact of his calling, he respectfully took off his hat, and held forth a sealed letter, without one word of reply or apology.

Sir Archibald put on his spectacles, and having carefully read the superscription, turned back towards the house without speaking.

"Here is a letter for you, O'Donoghue," said he, as he entered the parlour where the chief was already seated at his breakfast, while Kerry O'Leary, a short distance behind his chair, was relating the circumstances of the last night's adventure.

"Is it from Mark?" said the old man eagerly ; and then glancing at the writing, he threw it from him in disappointment, and added, "I am getting very uneasy about that lad."

"Had ye no' better read the letter ; the messenger wha brought it seems to expect an answer," interposed M'Nab.

"Messenger!—eh—not by post ? Is Hemsworth come back?" exclaimed O'Donoghue, with an evident degree of fear in his manner.

"No, sir," said Kerry, guessing to what topic his master's thoughts were turning; "the Captain is not coming, they say, for a month or six weeks yet."

"Thank God," muttered O'Donoghue; "that scoundrel never leaves me a night's rest, when I hear he's in the neighbourhood. Will you see what's in it, Archy?—my head is quite confused this morning; I got up three hours before my time."

Sir Archibald resumed his spectacles, and broke the seal. The contents were at some length it would seem, for as he perused the letter to himself, several minutes elapsed.

"Go on, Kerry," said O'Donoghue; "I want to hear all about this business."

"Well, I believe your honour knows the most of it now; for when I came up to the glen, they were all safe over, barrin' the mare; poor Kittane, she was carried down the falls, and they took her up near a mile below the old bridge, stone dead; Master Mark will fret his heart out when he hears it."

"This is a very polite note," interposed Sir Archy, as he laid the letter open before him, "from Sir Marmaduke Travers, begging to know when he may be permitted to pay his personal respects to you, and express his deep and grateful sense—his own words—of your son's noble conduct in rescuing his daughter at the hazard of his life. It is written with much modesty and good sense, and the writer canna be other than a true gentleman."

"Travers—Travers," repeated O'Donoghue; "why that's the man himself. It was he bought the estate; he's Hemsworth's principal."

"And if he be," replied M'Nab, "canna an honest man ha'e a bad servant? There's nothing about Hemsworth here. It's a ceevil demand from one gentleman to anither."

"So it is, then, Sir Marmaduke, that has been staying at the lodge these some weeks past. That was Mark's secret—poor dear boy, he wouldn't tell me, fearing it would annoy me. Well, what is it he wants."

"To visit you, O'Donoghue."

"What nonsense; the mischief's done already. The mortgage is foreclosed; and as for Carrignacurra, they can do nothing before the next term; Swaby says so, at least."

"Can ye no' comprehend. It is no law document; but a ceevil way to make your acquaintance. Sir Marmaduke wad pay his respects to ye."

"Well, let him come," said O'Donoghue, laughing; "he's sure to find me at home. The sheriff takes care of that for him. Mark will be here to-morrow or next day; I hope he won't come before that."

"The answer must be a written one," said M'Nab; "it wad na be polite to gie the flunkie the response."

"With all my heart, Archy, so that I am not asked to indite it. Miles O'Donoghue are the only words I have written for many a year"—and he added, with a half bitter laugh—"it would have been as well for poor Mark, if I had forgotten even that same."

Sir Archibald retired to write the answer, with many a misgiving as to the substance of the epistle; for while deeply gratified at heart, that his favourite, Herbert, had acquitted himself so nobly, his own pride was mortified, as he thought over the impressions a visit to the O'Donoghue household might have on the mind of a "haughty South-ern," for such in his soul he believed him.

There was no help for it, however; the advances were made in a spirit so very respectful, every line breathed such an evident desire, on the writer's part, to be well received, that a refusal, or even a formal acceptance of the proffered visit, was out of the question. His reply, then, accepted the intended honour, with a profession of satisfaction; apologising for his omission in calling on Sir Marmaduke, on the score of ill health, and concluded by a few words about Herbert, for whom many inquiries were made in the letter. This, written in the clear, but quaint, old-fashioned characters of the writer's time, and signed, "O'Donoghue," was carefully folded, and enclosed in a large square envelope, and with it in his hand, M'Nab re-entered the breakfast room.

"Wad you like to hear the terms of the response, O'Donoghue, before I seal it up?" asked Sir Archy, with an air of importance.

"No, no; I am sure it's all right and proper. You mentioned, of course, that Mark was from home, but we were expecting him back every day."

"I didna make ony remark o' that kind. I said ye wad be happy to see him, and felt proud at the honour of making acquaintance wi' him."

"Damn me if I do, then, Archy," broke in the old man roughly. "For so great a stickler for truth as yourself, the words were somewhat out of place. I neither feel pride nor honour on the subject. Let it go, however, and there's an end to it."

"I've despatched a messenger for Roach to Killarney; that bit of a brainless body, Terry, is gone by the mountain road, and we may expect the docter here to-night;" and with these words, Sir Archy departed to send off his epistle; and the O'Donoghue leaned back in his easy chair, sorely wearied and worried by the fatigues of the day.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HOUSE OF SICKNESS.

How painfully is the sense of severe illness diffused through every part of a household. How solemn is the influence it sheds on every individual, and every object; the noiseless step, the whispered words, the closed curtains, the interruption to the ordinary avocations of life, or the performance of them in gloom and sadness. When wealth and its appliances exist, these things take all the features of extreme care and solicitude for the sufferer; all the agencies of kindness and skill are brought into active exertion, to minister to the rich man in sickness; but when poverty and its evils are present—when the struggle is against the pressure of want, as well as the sufferings of malady, the picture is indeed a dark one.

The many deficiencies in comfort, which daily habit has learned to overlook, the privations which in the active conflict with the world are forgotten, now, come forth in the solitude of the sick house, to afflict and afflict us, and we sorrow over miseries long lost to memory till now.

Never since the fatal illness which left O'Donoghue a widower, had there been any thing like dangerous sickness in the house; and like most people who have long enjoyed the blessings of uninterrupted health, they had no thought for such a calamity, nor deemed it among the contingencies of life. Now, however, the whole household felt the change. The riotous laughter of the kitchen was silenced, the loud speaking hushed, the doors banged by the wind, or the ruder violence of careless hands, were closed noiselessly—every thing betokened that sorrow was there. O'Donoghue himself paced to and fro in the chamber of the old tower, now, stopping to cast a glance down the glen, where he still hoped to see Mark approaching, now, resuming his melancholy walk in sadness of heart.

In the darkened sick-room, and by the bed, sat Sir Archibald, concealed by the curtain, but near enough to give assistance to the sick boy should he need it. He sat buried in his own gloomy thoughts, rendered gloomier, as he listened to the hurried breathings and low mutterings of the youth, whose fever continued to increase upon him. The

old ill-tempered cook, whose tongue was the terror of the region she dwelt in, sat smoking by the fire, nor noticed the presence of the aged fox hound, who had followed Kerry into the kitchen, and now lay asleep before the fire. Kerry himself ceased to hum the snatches of songs and ballads, by which he was accustomed to beguile the weary day. There was a gloom on every thing, nor was the aspect without doors more cheering. The rain beat heavily in drifts against the windows; the wind shook the old trees violently, and tossed their gnarled limbs in wild confusion, sighing with mournful cadence along the deep glen, or pouring a long melancholy note through the narrow corridors of the old house. The sound of the storm, made more audible by the dreary silence, seemed to weigh down every heart. Even the bare-legged little gossoon, Mickey, who had come over from Father Luke's with a message, sat mute and sad, and as he moved his naked foot among the white turf ashes, seemed to feel the mournful depression of the hour.

"'Tis a dreadful day of rain, glory be to God!" said Kerry, as he drew a fragment of an old much-soiled newspaper from his pocket, and took his seat beside the blazing fire. For some time he persevered in his occupation without interruption; but Mrs. Branaghan having apparently exhausted her own reflections, now turned upon him to supply a new batch.

"What's in the news, Kerry O'Leary? I think ye might as well read it out, as be mumbling it to yourself there," said she, in a tone seldom disputed in the realm she ruled.

"Musha then," said Kerry, scratching his head, "the little print bates me entirely; the letters do be so close, they hav'n't room to stir in, and my eyes is always going to the line above, and the line below, and can't keep straight in the furrow at all. Come here, Mickey, alanah! 'tis you ought to be a great scholar, living in the house with his reverence. They tell me," continued he, in a whisper to the cook—"they tell me, he can sarve mass already."

Mrs. Branaghan withdrew her dudeen at these words, and gazed at the little fellow with unmixed astonishment, who, in obedience to the summons, took his place beside Kerry's chair, and prepared to commence his task.

"Where will I begin, sir?"

"Begin at the news, av coorse," said Kerry, somewhat puzzled to decide what kind of intelligence he most desired. "Wh t's this here with a large P in the first of it?"

"Prosperity of Ireland, sir," said the child.

"Ay, read about that, Mickey," said the cook, resuming her pipe.

With a sing-song intonation, which neither regarded paragraph nor period, but held on equably throughout a column, the little fellow began—

"The prospect of an abundant harvest is now very general throughout the country; and should we have a continuance of the heavenly weather for a week or so longer, we hope the corn will all be saved."

As the allusion made here by the journalist, was to a period of several years previous, the listeners might be excused for not feeling a perfect concurrence in the statement.

"Heavenly weather, indeed!" grunted out the cook, as she turned her eyes towards the windows, against which the plashing rain was beating—Mike read on.

"Mr. Foran was stopped last night in Baggot-street, and robbed of his watch and clothes, by four villains who live in Stoney-batter; they are well known, and are advised to take care, as such depredations cannot go long unpunished. The two villains that broke into the house of the Archbishop of Dublin, and murdered the house-maid, will be turned off 'Lord Temple's trap,' on Saturday next; this will be a lesson to the people about the Cross-Poddlle, that we hope may serve to their advantage."

"Sir Miles M'Shane begs to inform the person who found his shoe-buckle after the last levee, that he will receive one and eight pence reward for the same, by bringing it to No. 2, Ely-place; or if he prefer it, Sir Miles will toss up who keeps the pair. They are only paste, and not diamond, though mighty well imitated."

"Paste!" echoed Mrs. Branaghan; "the lying thieves!" her notions on the score of that material being limited to patties and pie-crusts.

"The 'Bucks' are imitating the ladies in all the arts of beautifying the person.—Many were seen painted and patched at the duchess's last ball. We hope this effeminacy may not spread any farther.—It is Mr. Rigby, and not Mr. Harper, is to have the silk gown. Sir George Rose is to get the red ribbon for his services in North America."

"A silk gown and a red ribbon!" cried Mrs. Branaghan. "Bad luck to me, but they might be ashamed of themselves."

"Faix, I never believed what Darby Long said before," broke in Kerry. "He tould me he saw the bishop of Cork in a black silk petticoat like a female. Is there no more murders, Mickey?"

"I don't know, sir, barrin' they're in the fashionable intelligence."

"Well, read on."

"Donald, the beast, who refused to leave his cell in Trim gaol at

the last assizes, and was consequently fired at by a file of infantry, had his leg amputated yesterday by Surgeon Huston of this town, and is doing remarkably well."

"Where's the sporting news?" said Kerry. "Is not this it, here?" as he pointed to a figure of a horse above a column.

"Mr. Connolly's horse, Gabriel, would have been in first, but he stopped to eat Whaley, the jockey, when he fell. The race is to be run again on Friday next. It was Mr. Daly, and not Mr. Crosbie, horse-whipped the attorney over the course last Tuesday. Mr. Crosbie spent the day with the Duke of Leinster, and is very angry at his name being mentioned in the wrong, particularly as he is bound over to keep the peace towards all members of the bar for three years."

"Captain Heavyside and Mr. Malone exchanged four shots each on the Bull this morning. The quarrel was about racing and politics, and miscellaneous matters."

"It is rumoured that if the Chief Justice be appointed from England, he will decline giving personal satisfaction to the Master of the Rolls; but we cannot credit the report——"

"The Carmelites have taken Ranelagh-house for a nunnery."

"That's the only bit in the paper I'd give the snuff of my pipe for" said Mrs. Branaghan. "Read it again, acushla."

The boy re-read the passage.

"Well, well, I wonder if Miss Kate will ever come back again," said she, in a pause.

"To be sure she will," said Kerry; "what would hinder her? hasn't she a fine fortune out of the property? ten thousand, I heard the master say."

"Ayeh! sure it's all gone many a day ago; the sorra taste of a brass farthen's left for her, or any one else. The master sould every stick an' stone in the place, barrin' the house that's over us, and sure that's all as one as sould too. Ah, then, Miss Kate was the purty child, and had the coaxing ways with her."

"'Tis a pity to make her a nun," said Kerry.

"A pity! why would it be a pity, Kerry O'Leary?" said the old lady, bristling up with anger. "Isn't the nuns happier, and dacent, and higher nor other women, with rapscallions for husbands, and villains of all kinds for childher? Is it the likes of ye, or the crayture beside ye, that would teach a colleen the way to heaven? Musha, but they have the blessed times of it—fastin' and prayin', and doing all manner of penance, and talking over their sins with holy men."

"Whisht! what's that? there's the bell ringing above stairs," said

Kerry, suddenly starting up and listening. "Ay, there it is again," and, so saying, he yawned and stretched himself, and after several interjectional grumblings over the disturbance, slowly mounted the stairs towards the parlour.

"Are ye sleepin' down there, ye lazy deevils?" cried Sir Archy from the landing of the stairs. "Did ye no' hear the bell?"

"'Tis now I heerd it," said Kerry composedly, for he never vouchsafed the same degree of deference to Sir Archy, he yielded to the rest of the family.

"Go see if there be any lemons in the house, and lose no time about it."

"Faix, I needn't go far then to find out," whined Kerry; "the master had none for his punch these two nights; they put the little box into a damp corner, and, sure enough, they had beards on them like Jews, the same lemons, when they went to look for them."

"Go down then to the woman, M'Kelly's, in the glen, and see if she hae na some there."

"Oh murther! murther!" muttered Kerry to himself, as the whistling storm reminded him of the dreadful weather without doors. "'Tis no use in going without the money," said he slyly, hoping that by this home-thrust he might escape the errand.

"Ye maun tell her to put it in the account, man."

"'Tis in bad company she'd put it then," muttered Kerry below his breath, then added aloud—"Sorrow one she'd give, if I hadn't the sixpence in my hand."

"Canna ye say it's no' for yoursel', it's for the house—she wad na refuse that."

"No use in life," reiterated he solemnly; "she's a real naygur, and would not trust Father Luke with a week's snuff, and he's dealt there for sneeshin these thirty years."

"A weel, a weel," said M'Nab in a low harsh voice; "the world's growing waur and waur. Ye maun e'en gie her a shilling, and mind ye get nae bad bawbees in change; she suld gie ye twelve for saxpence."

Kerry took the money without a word in reply; he was foiled in the plan of his own devising, and with many a self-uttered sarcasm on the old Scotchman, he descended the stairs once more.

"Is Master Herbert worse?" said the cook, as the old huntsman entered the kitchen.

"Begorra he must be bad entirely, when ould Archy would give a shilling to cure him. See here, he's sending me for lemons down to Mary's."

Kerry rung the coin upon the table as if to test its genuineness, and muttered to himself—

“’Tis a good one, devil a lie in it.”

“There’s the bell again ; musha, how he rings it.”

This time the voice of Sir Archy was heard in loud tones summoning Kerry to his assistance, for Herbert had become suddenly worse, and the old man was unable to prevent him rising from his bed and rushing from the room.

The wild and excited tones of the youth were mixed with the deeper utterings of the old man, who exerted all his efforts to calm and restrain him as Kerry reached the spot. By his aid the boy was conveyed back to his bed, where, exhausted by his own struggles, he lay without speaking or moving for some hours.

It was not difficult to perceive, however, that this state boded more unfavourably than the former one. The violent paroxysms of wild insanity betokened, while they lasted, a degree of vital energy and force, which now seemed totally to have given way ; and although Kerry regarded the change as for the better, the more practised and skilful mind of Sir Archibald drew a far different and more dispiriting augury.

Thus passed the weary hours, and at last the long day began to decline, but still no sign, nor sound, proclaimed the doctor’s coming, and M’Nab’s anxiety became hourly more intense.

“If he come na soon,” said he, after a long and dreary silence, “he need na tak’ the trouble to look at him.”

“’Tis what I’m thinking too,” said Kerry, with a sententious gravity almost revolting—“when the fingers does be going that way, it’s a mighty bad sign. If I seen the hounds working with their toes, I never knew them recover.”

EDITED BY HARRY LORREQUER.

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